

**Blended Solutions:  
Mixing Application Virtualisation Technologies in the  
Enterprise**

**AOK Technology Briefing**

**This document has been created by**

**ChangeBASE** 

**Published: July 2011**

## The Evolution of Virtualisation Options

Desktop migrations in the enterprise have acted as a strong catalyst in the virtualisation of applications for both server and desktop platforms. Initially application virtualisation adoption and deployment was relatively slow, but now in 2011 we are seeing a rapid uptake in the deployment of virtualisation and more importantly a new trend in the enterprise; mixed virtualisation topologies and technologies in both the desktop and server migration effort.

Until recently, enterprises have employed a relatively small number of ways to deploy applications including native desktop installations (usually MSI Installer packages) and server-based hosting solutions. Now, we are seeing an explosion of technologies and approaches to application virtualisation scenarios that include;

- Hosted, Server-based computing (Citrix and Microsoft Remote Desktop Services)
- Virtualised (Citrix XenApp, Microsoft Application Virtualisation [App-V], Symantec Workspace Virtualisation, VMware ThinApp)
- Streamed (Microsoft App-V and Citrix XenApp)
- Layered (VMware ThinApp and Symantec Workspace Virtualisation)

## The Advantages of a Blended Solution

Each technology has its own distinct advantages including;

- Hosting : central management and native server based installations
- Virtualised: flexible deployment model and the “End of DLL Hell”
- Streamed: enhanced storage and speed
- Layered: simple to implement and deploy

The challenge for the enterprise now is not what technology is best, but what mix of approaches and technologies is required. A few core challenges relating to mixed virtualisation or “Hybrid Hypervisor” scenarios include;

- What is the best virtualisation approach and technology for my existing infrastructure?
- What is the best virtualisation technology for my application portfolio?
- Will my virtualisation technology limit future upgrades and deployment scenarios?

## The Application Compatibility Challenge

As we have seen with a number of large-scale enterprise deployments of virtualisation technologies, not all applications are compatible or even suitable for virtualisation. Some of the compatibility challenges administrators must face in determining the most suitable virtualisation technology include;

- Microsoft DCOM Support
- Local Networking Issues
- Supported drivers (kernel mode drivers are generally not supported)
- Specific Memory and Object handling APIs
- 64-bit Support
- Management of 16-bit applications
- Interoperability of current application estate and environment

Testing applications for compatibility with one type of virtualisation environment is an expensive, time consuming resource that requires specialist skills (packaging, sequencing or profiling) and specific technology configurations. Assuming a minimal conversion time of half a day and then another half a day for testing for a particular virtualisation platform, this could require thousands of days of effort and expense from a typical enterprise. Testing each application for each virtualisation technology and approach is, given these costs, impossible for most enterprises.

## Key Recommendation to Enterprises - AUTOMATE

An automated approach that allows for multiple virtualisation approaches (server vs. streamed) and multiple technologies (VMware, Citrix, Microsoft App-V and Symantec Workspace Virtualisation) for the entire application portfolio is required. Most importantly, the testing and analysis approach should not require installation of the application due to the requirement for configuring virtual packages and the corresponding deployment environment for potentially thousands of applications.

AOK Virtualise-It is an automated assessment and remediation tool which provides a comprehensive analysis of potential compatibility challenges with the following technologies;

- Microsoft App-V
- VMware ThinApp
- Citrix XenApp
- Symantec Workspace Virtualisation

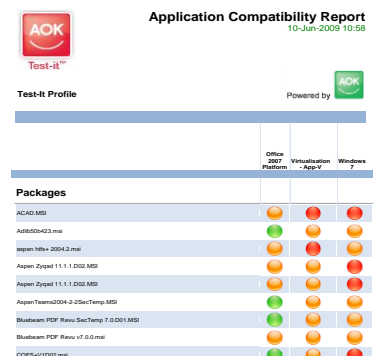


Figure 1: AOK Profile report for multiple Virtualization technologies

With its breadth and depth of analysis, AOK Virtualise-It allows for high-level summaries, in-depth detailed analysis and technology comparisons.

## Sources

**Microsoft Community**, Microsoft Business Desktop Deployment Model:

[http://www.microsoft.com/hk/community/article/article\\_060704.aspx](http://www.microsoft.com/hk/community/article/article_060704.aspx)

**Microsoft Application Virtualisation (App-V):**

<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/enterprise/solutions/virtualization/products/app-v.aspx>

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<http://www.vmware.com/products/thinapp/overview.html>

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## References

**ChangeBASE:**

<http://www.changebase.com>

[http://www.changebase.com/products\\_virtualise\\_it.aspx](http://www.changebase.com/products_virtualise_it.aspx)

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## About ChangeBASE

ChangeBASE started trading in 2007, and has since become the global leader in automated application compatibility testing and remediation.

We have produced a suite of software applications called AOK which help our customers to reduce costs, speed up deployments and improve the quality and consistency of their application packages when migrating from one operating system to another, or indeed to multiple target platforms. Some of the largest FTSE 500 organisations are included within our client base. We are Microsoft Gold certified, and we partner with organisations that are well established and respected in the field of platform migration. What's more, we pride ourselves on our dedicated and transparent relationships with all our clients and partners, which have helped us to build a large body of satisfied customers.

## About AOK



The AOK product suite will help you maintain the compatibility and integrity of your application estate through automated application compatibility testing and remediation, as well as conversion to virtual formats.

Early in a migration process, AOK quickly and accurately catalogues and reports on application compatibility issues that are likely to arise from migration to a new operating environment, helping you to make the best decisions for your own environment and estate. Once you have chosen your target platform, AOK automatically tests and fixes your applications before deploying them, which can speed up packaging delivery by 75%. Subsequent changes to any part of the new operating environment can be re-run against the entire portfolio, all at the press of a button. Further, if you are migrating to a virtual platform, AOK's auto-sequencing tool, AOK VReady-It, can dramatically reduce packaging times by virtualising up to 100 applications a day.

If you would like more information, please visit us at [www.changebase.com](http://www.changebase.com).

If you would like to talk to us about your migration project, feel free to contact us at [sales@changebase.com](mailto:sales@changebase.com).